

## Choosing a Multivitamin on a Gluten-Free Diet

### General Tips

- Make sure that the supplement is labeled gluten-free. It is best to choose labeled gluten-free supplements that have been tested for gluten contamination. This may not always be possible.
- The BIDMC Celiac Center recommends avoiding supplements containing wheat grass or barley grass even if labeled gluten-free.
- The gluten-free diet alone does not provide the optimal amounts of vitamin and minerals. For this reason, a multivitamin/mineral supplement is recommended for most people with celiac disease.
- Most multivitamins are best absorbed and tolerated when taken with meals.
- Check with your doctor or dietitian before starting a multivitamin. Ask him/her to help you choose a multivitamin that is specific to your needs.
  - There are many formulations of multivitamins on the market – for athletes, children, women, men, seniors, prenatal, etc.
  - In general, choose a multivitamin that provides no more than 100% of the recommended daily value (DV) for each nutrient (exception: B vitamins often appear in greater than 100% doses. Avoid doses above 200% of the daily allowance for the B vitamins unless directed by your health care provider).
  - Iron: Womens' multivitamins usually contain 18mg of iron. Mens' contain 0-8mg. Postmenopausal womens' typically do not contain iron. Some people need more iron than what is in a standard multivitamin. Iron for people with celiac disease is recommended based on age, gender, diet, and blood tests, such as a complete blood cell count (CBC), iron and serum ferritin. Talk to your doctor about having your levels checked before taking iron.
- Coffee and tea lower absorption of some vitamins and minerals. When possible, take your multivitamin separate from coffee and tea.
- If you have allergies or food sensitivities, read the label carefully to avoid unwanted ingredients.
- Chewable and gummy vitamins may be incomplete (lacking B vitamins and iron). You may need to take these separately if you choose to take a chewable or gummy multivitamin.
- Cheaper is rarely better. Cheaper ingredients tend to be less absorbable and may cause digestive problems.
  - Examples of some of these inexpensive ingredients are multivitamins that contain chloride, hydroxide, oxides, phosphates, and sulfates.
- Some supplements use chelated minerals, which are more readily absorbed because the mineral is bonded to an amino acid. Amino acids are easily absorbed by the body. Minerals in higher quality supplements will most likely be in a chelated form. Examples are calcium citrate and magnesium glycinate.

- Check with your healthcare provider before starting **any** supplement. Some need to be taken at certain times of the day, with or without food, and with or without other supplements or medications.

## **Which companies offer gluten-free vitamin and mineral supplements?**

Blue Bonnet: 281-240-3332  
[www.bluebonnetnutrition.com](http://www.bluebonnetnutrition.com)

Country Life: 800-645-5768  
[www.countrylifevitamins.com](http://www.countrylifevitamins.com)

Freeda's Vitamins: 800-777-3737  
[www.freedavitamins.com](http://www.freedavitamins.com)

Kirkman Labs: 800-245-8282  
[www.kirkmanlabs.com](http://www.kirkmanlabs.com)

Nature Made: 800-276-2878  
[www.naturemade.com](http://www.naturemade.com)

Pioneer Nutritionals: 800-458-8483  
[www.pioneernutritional.com](http://www.pioneernutritional.com)

Solgar: 877-SOLGAR-4  
[www.solgar.com](http://www.solgar.com)

These supplements are available to patients through their provider:

Douglas Labs  
[www.douglaslabs.com](http://www.douglaslabs.com)

Vital Nutrients  
[www.vitalnutrients.net](http://www.vitalnutrients.net)

Integrative Therapeutics  
[www.integrativeinc.com](http://www.integrativeinc.com)

Pure Encapsulations  
[www.pureencapsulations.com](http://www.pureencapsulations.com)

Metagenics  
[www.metagenics.com](http://www.metagenics.com)

Be sure to look for supplements **labeled gluten-free** as some of these companies make products that are not gluten-free.

*Caution: Some vitamin and mineral supplements contain lactose, soy, fructose and other ingredients that may cause gastrointestinal discomfort in some people.*